

December 01, 2008

***CTA-NW RESPONSE TO THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION STUDY ON SPECIAL NEEDS
TRANSPORTATION***

OVERVIEW

The Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) has been instructed by the Washington State legislature to determine the best means for achieving regional coordination of transportation services for people with special needs. Accordingly, a consultant, Nelson/Nygaard, was commissioned by the JTC to conduct a study and make recommendations. The resulting *Special Needs Transportation Coordination Study* contains important research on the current special needs transportation landscape in Washington.

CTA-NW

CTA-NW (Community Transportation Association of the Northwest) is a non-profit organization, whose purpose is to bring together organizations, agencies, groups and individuals engaged in providing, developing and sustaining community transportation programs to enhance mobility and equalize opportunity for people with a variety of specialized transportation needs.

Our members include organizations providing specialized transportation services, organizations or individuals interested in specialized transportation, Government/State agencies, and organizations providing equipment and/or supplies for specialized transportation providers. Our members also include urban and rural public transportation systems, contractors and brokers, including publicly funded, for-profit and non-profit entities that directly operate or contract for the operation of vehicles engaged in the delivery of specialized transportation services.

Recognizing the importance of the JTC Study and its Findings and Proposed Recommendations, CTA-NW has surveyed its members on the proposed recommendations found in the draft Final report posted on the JTC website on 11/19/08. As an organization whose goals include the promotion of coordination among CTA-NW members and related organizations, agencies and groups and advocating for adequate resources to meet the mobility needs of riders CTA-NW members believed it important to provide public comment to the Study. There were 14 agencies or organizations who responded to the survey. The survey results are as follows:

1. Strengthen ACCT's Role as Statewide Oversight Body

79% support

2. Establish Local Coordinating Boards and Community Access Managers

69% do **not** support

3. Promote Coordination of Public Transit and Medicaid Services

90% support

- **Additional Survey information in this category indirectly related to study**

Require all state agencies, not only Medicaid, to purchase transportation through regional broker	69% support
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4. Establish and Use Uniform Definitions and Reporting Requirements

4 (b) Require ACCT members and CAMs to use common definitions	77% support
4 (c) Develop uniformity in performance and cost reporting	57% support
4 (d) Establish a single clearinghouse for driver background checks	93% support

- **Additional Survey information in this category indirectly related to study**

Establish uniformity by mode and passenger type for vehicle and driver standards	77% support
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5. Provide Adequate Funding to Support Coordination

5 (a) Require all state and local agencies that purchase special needs transportation contribute to the support of ACCT	64% support
5 (b) Prioritize use of federal transportation SAFETEA-LU funds for mobility management purposes to help support local coordination councils	54% support
5 (c) Direct WSDOT to tie the use of funds it oversees to advance coordination efforts	62% support

- **Additional Survey information in this category indirectly related to study**

Establish a dedicated funding source that could be used for 'gap' funding and local mobility managers	79% support
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6. Improve Service Connectivity for Customers

6 (a) Identify transit "hubs" and develop a connectivity plan for each	50% support
6 (b) Identify and adopt common connectivity standards	79% support
6 (c) Develop, test and implement technology that can promote connectivity	100% support
6 (d) Eliminate artificial barriers that force transfers	100% support
6 (e) Institute corridor service where demand justifies it	93% support

7. Influence Facility Siting Practices

7 (a) Take accessibility into account as an operating cost when comparing potential sites	100% support
7 (b) Locate sites near a “cluster” of clients to ensure more efficient provision of Dial-a-Ride services	77% support
7 (c) Provide state and local incentives for private sector facilities to locate near transit	79% support
7 (d) Review access to transit for all private sector human services facilities	77% support
7 (e) Review preferred location with transit provider before purchase/lease finalized	64% support
7 (f) Provide more specific language defining “access to transit” in siting guidelines for state facilities	93% support
7 (h) Reduce parking requirements for housing developments serving senior and low-income residents, and for transit oriented developments	69% support

8. Enhance Coordination with Pupil Transportation

8 (a) Evaluate a wider use of community brokers to provide transportation for homeless students	79% support
8 (b) Direct OPSI to require local districts to track their expenditures	93% support
8 (c) Evaluate use of capital resources (school buses) when they are not being used for school purposes	92% support

▪ Additional Survey information in this category indirectly related to study

Collaborate with the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth or other associations to develop common goals and objectives for reauthorization of the McKinney Vento Act	83% support
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9. Seek to Influence Federal Planning and Program Requirements

9 (a) Include comparable planning requirements for human service agencies as established for use of public transit funds authorized through SAFETEA-LU.	64% support
9 (c) Support federal legislation that would increase the reimbursement rate authorized for volunteers	93% support
9 (d) Expand funding programs to be subject to Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plans	75% support

HIGHLIGHTS:

ACCT

- Part of the study purpose was to determine ACCT's future. 79% of the survey responders support the strengthening of ACCT's Role as Statewide Oversight Body.

BI-LEVEL COORDINATION

- 69% of the survey responders do **not** support the establishing of Local Coordinating Boards and Community Access Managers.

DSHS BROKERS

- 90% support further 3 Coordination of Public Transit and Medicaid Services
- 69% support requiring all state agencies, not only Medicaid, to purchase transportation through regional broker

AREAS OF 100% CONSENSUS

- 6. Improve Service Connectivity for Customers
 - 6 (c) Develop, test and implement technology that can promote connective
 - 6 (d) Eliminate artificial barriers that force transfers
- 7. Influence Facility Siting Practices
 - 7 (a) Take accessibility into account as an operating cost when comparing potential sites

In closing, we recognize the Legislature is faced with making difficult decisions during this next session, given the current budget crisis. **CTA-NW members strongly urge the Joint Transportation Committee and Legislature to maintain the current levels of special needs transportation funding.**

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input into this important study and hope our input has been useful.

CTA-NW
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